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Worcester (Mass.) Citizens

Proceedings of a public meeting of the...

Worcester

[1847?]

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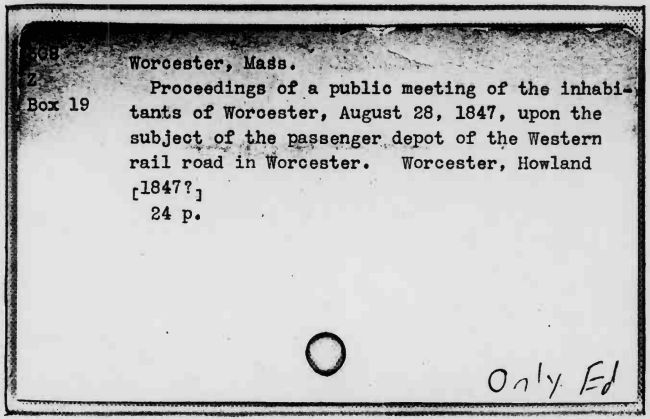
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Proceedings of a public meeting of the inhabitants of Worcester, August 28, 1847, upon the subject of the passenger depot of the Western rail road in Worcester. Worcester, Howland [1847?]
24 p.
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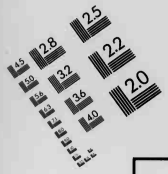
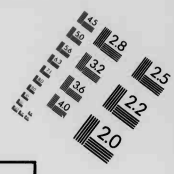
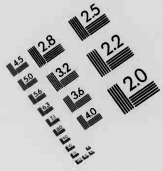
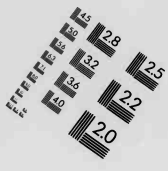

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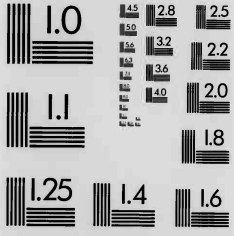

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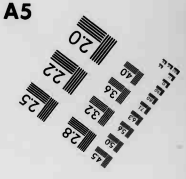
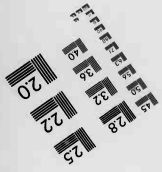
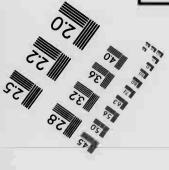
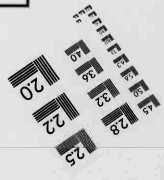

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PROCEEDINGS

OF

A PUBLIC MEETING

OF

THE INHABITANTS OF WORCESTER,

AUGUST 28, 1847,

UPON THE SUBJECT OF THE

PASSENGER DEPOT

OF THE

WESTERN RAIL ROAD

IN WORCESTER.

WORCESTER:
PRINTED BY HENRY J. HOWLAND,
171 Main Street.

PUBLIC MEETING.

Pursuant to public notice, a meeting of the inhabitants of Worcester was held at the Town Hall, on the evening of the 28th Aug. 1847, to consider the subject of the present locality of the Passenger Depot of the Western Rail Road in this town, and the inconveniences to which the public are subjected by reason of the same.

The meeting was called to order by Hon. Levi Lincoln. Hon. John Davis was chosen Chairman, and Col. James Estabrook Clerk of the meeting.

The Committee who had been appointed at a previous meeting, to confer with the Directors of the Western Rail Road, upon the subject of their Depot, presented a Report which was read to the meeting.

Samuel M. Burnside, Esq. then offered the following Resolutions, which after a full discussion, in which Hon. Benj. F. Thomas, Hon. A. D. Foster, John M. Earle, Hon. Rejoice Newton and Hon. Levi Lincoln, took a part, were unanimously adopted, viz.

Resolved, That this meeting have listened with intense interest to the report of its Committee, just read; and while it tenders them its thanks for their laborious, faithful, and long protracted services in attempting to secure the great public objects of their appointment, it cannot withhold the expression of its surprise, and deep regret, at the unexpected result of their interview, and correspondnce with the Directors of the Western Rail Road.

Resolved, That the Western Rail Road is a work of vast importance to our whole community; that it was undertaken, carried on, and completed under the authority of the Legislature, who had regard to the growing wants, the multiplied interests, and the accommodation of the whole Commonwealth, and not exclusively, nor principally, to the pecuniary profits of individual stockholders; inasmuch as the Government has furnished in money, and by credit, five sevenths of the eight million dollars expended in its construction, without which aid, personal enterprise would not have accomplished it.

Resolved, That the citizens of every section of the state, bearing just proportions of the public burthen, have a right to ask earnestly, and in

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the opinon of this meeting, a large majority of them *do* ask earnestly of the Directors, charged with the management of this expensive work, a just attention to their location, their business and convenience, without a too scrupulous calculation of expense, even if the desired improvements *should be attended, contrary to reasonable probability*, with some slight diminution of dividends which already exceed six per cent.; and some slight depression of stock, already more than ten per cent. above its par value;—an increase of profits for which the stockholders are altogether indebted to Government patronage.

Resolved, That the County of Worcester, in view of its wide spread territory, its great and expanding business, its rapidly increasing population, the constant necessity its people have for intercourse among themselves, and with residents in other Counties, and other States, at the Shire-town of the County, and of innumerable other considerations, have strong claims, which should not be longer neglected, for the accommodation prayed for in their petition, so unexpectedly rejected by the Directors of the Western Rail Road; and they will never cease to *urge their request*, on all proper occasions, until success shall reward their efforts.

Resolved, That the report of the Committee, together with the papers which accompany it, or such of them and such others as they may select, be published in pamphlet form, and distributed under their direction for public information.

JOHN DAVIS, *Chairman.*

JAMES ESTABROOK, *Clerk.*

REPORT.

The Committee who were selected at a public meeting of the Citizens of Worcester, to confer with the Directors of the Western Rail Road, relative to uniting the Passenger Depot or Station of that Company, in this town, with that of the Boston and Worcester Rail Road, have thought it due to their Constituents, that they should make a report of what they had done in the performance of the duty assigned them.

They therefore beg leave to submit a plain and simple statement of what has taken place in their endeavors to carry out the wishes of those whom they had the honor to represent.

Before proceeding to do this, however, it may not be inappropriate to recall very briefly, the circumstances which led to the appointment of this committee.

It will be recollected that about the year 1835, the Boston and Worcester Rail Road Company, purchased the land upon which their passenger Depot is situated. In making this purchase they were aided by the contributions of several individuals in the town, which were then regarded as liberal, and evinced a degree of public spirit which was fully appreciated by that Corporation. In the year 1833, the plan of constructing a Rail Road from the termination of that of the Boston and Worcester Company, westward, had been so far matured that an act of incorporation for the purpose was obtained. The nominal capital of the company, was fixed at a sum not exceeding $2,000,000, and efforts were soon after made to obtain subscriptions for the stock.

In the then stage of the history of Rail Roads, it is not surprising that the difficulties in the way of such a vast enterprise, should have seemed to be almost insurmountable. At length, however, in the year 1836, the aid of the Commonwealth was solicited, and the legislature having passed an act authorizing an increase of the Capital Stock of the Company, to $3,000,000, the State became a subscriber for one third part of the Capital.

When the Company were about to locate the eastern terminus of their road, so as to form a junction with the Boston and Worcester road it was thought desirable to establish it where it now is, instead of uniting it at the terminus of the latter Road. To accomplish this an application was made to the County Commissioners of this county, and a record of their proceedings in the premises forms a part of this report. This took place in 1837, and by granting that request the company were enabled to locate their passenger depot where it now is.

From information received by the committee, they are led to believe that had the Commissioners supposed the arrangement in reference to that depot was to be any thing more than temporary, they would not have granted the application of that company, and that, in that event, their depot could not have been lawfully established where it was.

The public felt, from the first, that a separate depot for the Western Road, from that of the Boston and Worcester road, was attended with inconvenience, but they knew how much that corporation was embarrassed in its operations, and having been led to believe that the arrangement was only for a season, they silently acquiesced in the measure.

Besides, for a considerable time after the road went into operation, its trains, by running over the Worcester road from the terminus of Western road to the Worcester depot, regularly, arrived at and departed from that depot. So that passengers were thereby accommodated, though at the expense of some little delay.

In the progress of events, even this accommodation was in a great measure withheld, whereby passengers coming from the west, who had occasion to stop at Worcester, were left at the depot of the Western road, nearly half a mile from Main Street, and were obliged to procure some private means of conveyance, to the points which they wished to reach.

Soon after the work upon the Western road had been commenced, if it had not been obvious from the beginning, it was known that the nominal capital of the Company, if it were all paid in, would be altogether inadequate to accomplish the undertaking. The public were accordingly appealed to through the press, through popular meetings and the legislature. It was placed upon the ground of a great State enterprise in which all its citizens were interested, while the idea of its becoming to the then holders of its Stock, a source of profit, was entertained, it is believed, by no one.

The public were, in effect, given to understand that unless the State put forth her hand in aid of the work it must stop. The appeal was successful, and by three successive loans of her credit to the company, in 1838—1839 and 1841, she aided it to the extent of $4,000,000, besides the $1000,000, which she had already subscribed towards the capital stock of the Company.

A loan besides these, was negotiated by the Company, for $1,000,000, with the City of Albany, so that the work was at length completed at a cost of about $8,000,000, only $2,000,000 of which had been contributed by private stockholders, exclusive of the State.

It was in this condition of things that it was recently stated and understood, that measures were proposed to be taken by which there was to be a common Depot constructed for the several Rail Roads that centre in Worcester, and that, in order to carry out the plan, it was necessary to make several important changes in some of the streets, which would require the action and assent of the town. A meeting was thereupon called, and by an almost unanimous vote of the citizens of the town, whatever was deemed necessary on their part to accomplish the work, was at once granted.

This meeting was held in December last, but after the lapse of a few

months, it was understood that so far as the Western Road was concerned, the scheme of uniting in one Depot was, for some reason, suspended or abandoned.

Upon receiving this information, several citizens of Worcester, knowing the state of public sentiment upon the subject, prepared and forwarded to the Directors of that Road, the Petition, a copy of which forms a part of this Report.

The receipt of this Petition was duly acknowledged by the President of that Company, on the 18th of March. Some time having elapsed, and nothing further having been heard from the Directors, it was thought proper to call a public meeting of the citizens of this town, in order to have a full expression of their views upon the subject embraced in the Petition. On the 25th of March, a meeting was accordingly held, at which it was unanimously concluded that a Committee should be appointed to confer with the Directors of the Western Road, at the earliest opportunity which they should see fit to grant.

The Committee thereupon, through their chairman, addressed a note to the President of the Road on the 30th of March, a copy of which forms a part of this Report.

It was understood that the Directors were then prosecuting measures before the Legislature, then in session, for obtaining an Act to increase the capital stock of the Corporation, and it was hoped that their presence in Boston for that purpose, would enable them to hear the Committee at an early day. But though their letter duly reached the President, no answer was returned, except the allusion in the note of April 13th, which is annexed to this Report, till the Legislature was upon the eve of adjournment, and the Act for increasing the capital stock of the Western Road had become a law. Then, on the 26th of April, a letter from the President, fixing the time for meeting the Committee, was received, which also forms a part of this Report.

At the time fixed for the proposed meeting, six of the Committee only were able to attend. They found upon entering the Directors' room, the place appointed for the meeting, eight of that body, including the President, assembled. The Superintendent and Engineer of the Road was also present. One of the Directors immediately left the room, and was seen again by the Committee only as they met him in the ante room, when they were leaving at the close of the interview. Another of them also left at the same time, but returned before the hearing was closed.

The Clerk in the first place read the Petition which has already been mentioned. The Committee then enquired of the Directors in express terms, whether the location of their Passenger Depot in Worcester was an open question? because they did not wish to take up time in discussing a matter which had already been settled.

It was explicitly stated in reply, that the Directors were ready to consider it as an open question, and to hear the views of the Committee, and those whom they represented, upon the subject, and to act upon it as a matter on which they had not formed a judgment.

Upon this assurance the Committee proceeded to present such facts and considerations as they believed were calculated to have proper weight

upon the minds of the Directors. These were listened to by them with great courtesy and apparent attention.

They urged, among other things, that the Western Road was in reality a great public work, built by the faith and credit of the State, in accomplishing which, two only out of seven millions had been advanced by private stockholders, and this was without an expectation, on their part, of any immediate return. That the Directors were the Trustees of a great public enterprize, and were therefore bound reasonably to regard the wants of the public in respect to it. That here was a case where a large portion of the public were seriously annoyed by the present arrangement as to their depot, and the want of that connexion which ought to exist between the trains upon this road and those upon the other roads, at this central point, and that all this might be easily obviated by an expenditure of a reasonable sum of money.

In order that the Directors might judge somewhat of the extent of the community who were subjected to embarrassment by the present arrangement of the Depot of the Western Road, the Committee exhibited to them statistics which had been derived from authentic sources, tending to show the amount of business which was done by the Western Road in connexion with their Depot at Worcester. They gave a list of the towns lying west of Worcester, within the County, whose business rendered it peculiarly desirable to have access to it as the shire town, by means of this road, the population of which towns, by the last census, exceeded 16,000. This list they append to this Report, and it will be found to include no part of the twelve or more thousand inhabitants of Worcester, who would be more or less directly affected by the proposed change.

They stated the amount of freight money collected at this point for merchandize, &c., transported upon the Western Road during one year, ending March 1, 1847, to be $67,436,82. Nine-tenths of this merchandize, it is believed, was on account of citizens of this town. This statement was made, not in reference to any removal of the Freight Depot, but as having a tendency to show how extensive the interests and relations of a community must be, whose business led to such an amount of expenditure in freights, and that the number of those who were to be affected by the facilities which the Western Road saw fit to grant or withhold, far exceeded what might, at first view, be thought to be a true estimate.

It also served to show how far the amount thus paid into the treasury of that road, warranted an expectation, in return, of a reasonable expenditure for the accommodation of those by whom it was paid.

It ought to be added, that this amount was exclusive of at least $1,800 paid here yearly to Thompson's Express, for the transportation of packages, &c., on the Western Road; so that the aggregate amount of freight bills paid at this point, was but a fraction less than $70,000, in a single year.

The amount of fares paid by passengers coming to and stopping at Worcester, by the Western Road, during the year 1846, was $25,480,71, and by those going from the same point, westward, during that year, was $26,911,47—making an aggregate of money paid by passengers, to and from this point, $52,392,18, in a single year.

The Directors were reminded that all those passengers who had occasion to stop at Worcester for the transaction of business there, or to take passage by the other Railroads now in operation or in progress of construction, were, and would be, by the present arrangement of the Depot, subjected to unnecessary delays, and expense, and to various annoyances, which had led already to so much dissatisfaction, that, to the certain knowledge of some of the Committee, many gentlemen, from towns in the County, who would be glad to avail themselves of this road, as a means of access to Worcester, chose rather to incur the trouble and expense of procuring a private conveyance, than to submit to the inconveniences to which they would be subjected under the present arrangement of the Depots.

The Directors were reminded that it was not possible for passengers to hire themselves transported from the Depot of the Boston, Norwich, Nashua and Providence Roads, to the Western Depot, without incurring additional expense, and being subjected to the hazard of the loss of baggage, and often being prevented from regularly pursuing their journey, by the delay of a few minutes in passing from one Depot to the other; that the amount of these inconveniences would be constantly increasing, as the lines of Rail Roads connected with the roads now in use were multiplied, and to shew that they were multiplying, they referred to the "Stony Brook" road, so called, which is to connect the city of Lowell and the Roads that centre there with the Nashua Road at Groton, and to the Barre and South Gardner Road, connecting the Vermont and Massachusetts Road with the various roads at Worcester.

The Committee further urged that, if any change in respect to the Depots was to be made to meet the wants of the public, the present seemed to be the most favorable, if not the only time, at which to have it done, since the Boston and Worcester Company were about to construct a Depot in reference to their own accommodation, and that of the other roads centering here, and were willing and desirous of making provision thereby for the satisfactory accommodation of the Western Road, upon as favorable terms as the same could be done.

And in respect to the ability of the Western Road to meet any expenditure that might be occasioned by the proposed change, and the reasonableness of such an appropriation, the Committee reminded the Directors of the fact, that when the Commonwealth was called on for a loan of its credit, in 1838, the future probable business of the entire road, was estimated at an amount not exceeding $400,000 annually, of which passengers were to constitute $300,000, and freight $100,000, and that even that estimate was considered large, if not exaggerated. Yet that for the accommodation of that amount of business alone, the State assumed the risk and charge of $5,000,000.—That, as already stated, the actual amount of business of the Road, at this point, was, in passengers more than one sixth of what had been originally estimated for the entire road, and, in freight, was considerably more than two thirds of the amount estimated for the whole line of road, and that the aggregate of these, the last year, was more than one seventh of the entire business of the whole road in 1845, as stated by the Directors in their report of 1846.

With an annual income from the Road of a million of dollars, and its stock selling in market above par, the Committee thought that, applying the principle upon which the State had originally acted in reference to the accommodation of all its citizens, a portion of them who furnished, or were directly interested in such a large proportion of the whole business of the road, had a right to expect something like a corresponding regard to be paid to their wants and interests, by a Board who stand in the relation of trustees for the public, of a property, five seventhes of whose cost had been paid or furnished by the Commonwealth.

The Directors were also reminded of the circumstances under which their Depot was originally located where it now is, and the record of the proceedings of the County Commissioners already referred to, was read before them. They were reminded that the arrangement was originally understood to be a temporary one, which should be corrected as soon as the funds and general prosperity of the Road would justify the expense; that the people had quietly submitted to the inconvenience, under the belief that it would ere long be removed, and that now that the means of the Road were ample, and its dividends promised to be large, the public did think the time had come for their being relieved from these embarrassments, which could only be done by bringing the Passenger Depots of the various roads to a common point.

These, and various other facts and views, were urged upon the attention of the Directors, and were listened to with apparent interest and attention. None of these positions were then controverted, but, on the contrary, one or more of the Directors remarked, that the considerations thus presented were important, and some of them new. A somewhat free conversation was then had, on the part of the Directors, with each other, and with the Committee. They stated that it was their desire to accommodate the people in this part of the Commonwealth, as far as they could do so consistently with their duty to the Road, and to show how they had considered this matter, one of them read to the Committee a Report, which had been made to and accepted by the present Board, upon the subject of the Passenger Depot in Worcester. The Committee have not a copy of that Report, but they understood it expressly to admit that the Depot was not located in the proper place, if regard was had to the accommodation of the public, that the Depots of the Boston and Worcester and Western Roads, ought to be united here if it could be done at a reasonable expense, and that the great, if not the only material objection, to the proposed change, was the expense with which it would be attended, which the Report was understood to estimate at about $100,000.

If any other serious or important objections to the removal of their Depot, were embraced in that Report, they escaped the attention, or have escaped the recollection of the Committee.

To this suggestion of expense, the Committee stated that they were authorised to say, that the Boston and Worcester Road had nearly matured a plan for a Depot for the accommodation of their own, with the other roads, including the Western, and that "there was probability enough of a *very large* reduction of cost of providing it, from the former

estimate, to justify a careful enquiry on the part of the Western Rail Road Directors, if their decision should hang upon that question."

And the Committee further ventured to suggest that, even if the removal of their Depot should be attended with some additional expense, it could better be borne by so wealthy and able a Corporation, in the form of an annual rent, as was the manner by which it was proposed to be done, than by imposing upon individuals who might have occasion to make use of their road, the payment of an onerous and vexatious tax, in the form of extra charges and unavoidable embarrassments. And they expressed the confident belief, that the increased amount of business which would be brought to the road by the proposed change, would go far, if not to the full extent, of reimbursing to the Corporation any necessary outlays of moneys which they might thereby incur.

No formal action was taken by the Directors while the Committee were present, but there was an informal and repeated expression of opinion, on the part of individuals of the Board, that the matter was one which deserved grave consideration; that the Directors of the Boston and Worcester Road should be conferred with, in order to see what arrangement could be effected with that Road; that whatever could reasonably be done in the premises, by the Directors of the Western Road, should be done, and the subject of visiting Worcester by a part, or all the Directors, to ascertain more fully what could be accomplished there, to meet the public wants, was freely spoken of by more than one of the Board, in the presence of the others, and no objection apparently made to either of these propositions, by any of their number.

It was further stated by the Engineer of the Road, as the Committee understood him, that he himself was the first to suggest a union of Depots as a proper measure for the Western Road to take; and the President was also understood to state, that the measure had, from the time of its being first proposed, met with his approbation so far as its desirableness was concerned.

The meeting, on the whole, was of a most satisfactory character to the Committee. They received from the Directors, in all things, the attention and courtesy which they had a right to expect from gentlemen of their known intelligence and respectability, and they left the Directors with a confident belief that some measures would be taken, which would be satisfactory to all parties concerned.

It is hardly necessary, therefore, to say, that the Committee received the Report adopted by the Directors of the Western Rail Road, on the 14th of May, which forms a part of this Report, with surprise and regret. No communication had, in the mean time, been had by them with the Committee, or any other person in this vicinity, as they can hear, nor had the Directors, as the Committee are assured, had any formal communication with the Directors of the Boston and Worcester Rail Road, on the subject of their Report.

The Committee do not propose to comment, at length, upon either the premises or conclusions of the Directors in their Report. But they must say that, as they understand it, the Directors now place the denial of the prayer of the petition, upon other and in most respects altogether differ-

ent grounds from those taken in their former Report, or in their interview with the Committee. Consequently, much of that Report is now, for the first time, presented for the consideration of the Committee, nor have they before had an opportunity to examine or comment upon the facts and arguments that it contains.

It may, therefore, be proper for the Committee to say a word or two upon the positions assumed in that Report.

As to the probable cost spoken of, they can only say that, if the statement of the Agent of the Boston and Worcester Road is to be relied on, there is good reason to believe that the estimate of the Directors would be found considerably to exceed the actual expense of carrying into effect such an arrangement as would be satisfactory to the public.

Upon the matter of the second and third objections, the public have been aware that differences, at one time, existed between the Western and Boston and Worcester Roads, relative to the division of fares paid by persons travelling over both Roads. But the Committee are unable to appreciate the force of an objection to a great and admitted public benefit, growing out of a division of fares so minute as that which is contemplated in the Directors' Report. How far the Boston and Worcester Road would be willing to yield, or satisfactorily compromise, so trifling a matter, does not seem to have been thought worthy of the Directors' enquiry, though if the fact stated in their Report be true, that the Boston and Worcester Company are actually straightening an existing curve in their own road, and thereby shortening its length, it would seem that they would not be unwilling to waive the advantage of a little larger share of the "joint fare," if by so doing they could the better secure the convenience of the public.

However this might be, it is difficult to believe that the public will long be content to submit to be taxed and annoyed while using these Roads, in order to save to the one or the other, such a paltry advantage, in the division of their "joint fares," as seems to be contemplated with so much interest by the Directors in their Report.

In regard to the fourth and fifth grounds upon which the Directors base their Report, a brief explanation will show how far they are well sustained.

It is known to most who are interested in this question, that the track of the Western Rail Road, after leaving that of the Worcester Road, crosses the Norwich Road, so that the trains upon the Western and Norwich Roads pass over the same points of intersection. The distance passed over by the Norwich trains, between these points of intersection, is about 6972 feet, while that over which the Western trains pass, is about 5380 feet.

If therefore the trains upon the Western Road were to pass by the Depot of the Worcester and Norwich Roads instead of where they now do, they would have to run the distance of 1592 feet further than they now do. And by running over this additional distance of about 96 rods, every thing which the public desire in respect to the Depot might be accomplished.

Upon the question how far this might be done safely and without

unreasonable delay, the Committee would refer to one or two facts.

In the first place, the "Quick trains" between Boston and New York through Norwich, have passed daily over this curve for years, sometimes twice and sometimes four times a day, without any such hazard, trouble or delay as to occasion complaint in any quarter, to the knowledge of the Committee.

In the next place, as the whole distance between the crossing of the Norwich Road and the junction of the Western and Worcester Roads is but a trifle over a mile, if the whole of this were added to the distance run by the cars of the Western Road, it could only occasion a difference in time of less than seven minutes at the low rate of speed of twelve miles the hour. But when it is recollected that the additional distance to be run by the proposed change is in fact less than one third of a mile, it is difficult to understand upon what premises the Directors assume that the change would upon an average delay their trains *nearly fifteen minutes.*

Nor is it easy to see how they could have overlooked the delay to which their trains are subjected every day in crossing the Norwich and Providence Roads, in order to prevent the danger of collisions with the trains upon those Roads, which delay and danger would be at once obviated by adopting the change which is prayed for in the petition.

Besides these facts, the Committee are informed that as late as the year 1842, and with a full knowledge of all the facts as to distance, switches, curvature and delays now relied on by the Directors, a former Board endeavored to effect an arrangement with the Norwich Road whereby they should run their trains over this very curve, and by the Worcester and Norwich Depot, and were only prevented from accomplishing it by a difference of opinion between the corporations upon the price that one should pay to the other for certain privileges which were proposed to be conceded.

The desirableness and feasibility of the same arrangement, if it were not for the expense, were, as the Committee understand, not only conceded but sustained in the former report of the present Board, and neither the Engineer nor the President intimated, at the interview with the Committee, that a plan originating with them with a full knowledge of the facts, was liable to the objections which now stand forth so prominently in the Directors' report.

What new light has been shed upon the minds of the Directors since that interview, the committee have not been informed. It is earnestly to be hoped that in a matter of so much moment to the public, no differences which may have heretofore existed between the Boston and Worcester and the Western Roads as to "the division of joint fare," has been allowed to influence their judgment in granting or refusing the prayer of petitioners for a great public improvement.

It would be discourteous in the Committee to pronounce any of the positions of the Directors in this report as either frivolous or weak. But they must confess that they are unable to appreciate the validity of the doubt intimated by the Directors, "whether any advantages could be derived by having so many corporations meet in one common depot,"

even with all the circumstances attending it which are alluded to in this report in connexion with such doubt.

It is not the design of the Committee to criticise the report of the Directors, any farther than to say that to their minds its reasons and its conclusions are unsatisfactory and of little weight, in comparison with the great and growing inconveniences to which the public are and will be subjected so long as the present state of things shall continue to exist.

Although this report has already been so much extended, the Committee cannot conclude without repeating their unqualified regret that the Directors of a great public work like this, should have felt themselves called upon to refuse what was prayed for in that petition. It is a matter that concerns a large community. Not only the inhabitants of this growing town, but this whole county and thousands more remote, are directly interested in their decision of this question. It is not a small thing, in the aggregate, that those who may throng to this point by means of the other Rail Roads terminating here, in order to avail themselves of this Western Road, should needlessly be forced to submit to inconveniences and annoyance, and at the same time be subjected to the hazard of the loss of baggage, of detention upon the road, and of various other nameless discomforts which necessarily attend the present arrangement.

It does not seem to be just even to the stockholders of the other Roads that unite here. It will compel the public to seek other avenues of travel less liable to these objections. And the Committee greatly mistake the tone of public feeling, or there will at length grow up a state of irritation in the public mind which will be heard in a loud and decided remonstrance upon the subject.

The Committee are not unaware how powerless this community is to correct even the least of these evils by any direct action on their part.

The Commonwealth has given the control and management of this immense and powerful corporation into the hands of a body of nine men, and to their determination as to what accommodations the public shall enjoy, the public must submit.

To embarrass the action of this board is among the last things in which this community ought or would be willing to engage. In the rise, progress and signal success of the Western Rail Road, this community have always felt a just and generous interest. They have shown this at times when their influence was needed, and its exercise was felt and acknowledged. The time was when it was regarded problematical whether the construction of this road would not injuriously affect the growth and prosperity of this town. But her representatives, laying aside local considerations, were among the most willing to pledge the faith of the State to carry forward the work. To a great extent the same spirit has been uniformly evinced by the whole county, in the legislature and wherever else they have been called upon to act.

While, therefore, the Directors of that Road are willing to incur large outlays of expense in constructing new tracks, new branches and new Depots, to accommodate other portions of the Commonwealth, the people of this portion of it will be slow to believe that they alone are to be denied

a reasonable accommodation which can be furnished at a comparatively trifling expense. And this would seem to be the more unreasonable when it is recollected that the Directors of the Western Road, as is well understood, are proposing to expend large sums of money upon their present Depot in order to render its accommodations even reasonably comfortable for the public in the situation where it now is.

The Committee, in conclusion, are constrained by the course which the Directors have taken upon this petition, to believe that they do not understand the wants and wishes of this part of the Commonwealth. This may have arisen from the fact that no gentleman from this county has for some years been a member of that Board. Whatever may be the cause, it is far easier to suppose that they do not understand the public wants, than to believe that they would be willing capriciously to disregard them. The public, here, may therefore still cherish the hope that the Directors will yet give this subject the attention it deserves.

In drawing their attention to the subject, the example of the Boston and Worcester, and other Rail Roads here, can hardly fail to have an influence upon the Directors of the Western Road.

Although, with a single exception, these roads have been carried forward without any aid from the public treasury, their managers have in most things manifested a liberality and a just appreciation of the wants of the public that has gained for them the confidence and entitled them to the favorable regard of a whole community.

It is difficult, therefore, to believe that in the management of a great state work there can, for any length of time, be a spirit manifested which is less liberal or less magnanimous than that which directs the affairs of corporations which owe their success to private contributions alone.

With a renewed expression of the hope that the just and reasonable expectations of this community in respect to the matter which the Committee have had in charge, may ere long be met and answered, they respectfully submit this report, and ask to be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.

LEVI LINCOLN,
EMORY WASHBURN,
GEO. T. RICE,
GEO. BOWEN,
JOHN W. LINCOLN,
PLINY MERRICK,
CHARLES ALLEN,
STEPHEN SALISBURY,
ISAAC DAVIS,
JOHN DAVIS.

Worcester, August 5th, 1847.

APPENDIX.

PAPERS REFERRED TO IN THE BODY OF THE REPORT.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

WORCESTER, ss. At a meeting of the County Commissioners, begun and held at Worcester, within and for the county of Worcester, on the fourth Tuesday of March, being the twenty-eighth day of said month, and by adjournment, on the third Tuesday of May, being the sixteenth day of said month, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven. By John W. Lincoln, Esq. Chairman, William Crawford, Esq. County Commissioner, and Benjamin Davenport, Esq. Special Commissioner.

Whereas the Western Rail Road Corporation, by their agent, have represented, that by their act of incorporation, they are authorized to lay out and construct their Rail Road, *from the Western termination of the Boston and Worcester Rail Road*, to the Connecticut river, in the town of Springfield, &c.—That they consider it important to them and to the public, that their *Merchandize Depot, at least*, should be located in Worcester, at or near that of the said Boston and Worcester Rail Road Corporation, and they are desirous of laying out and constructing the Rail Road in as direct a line as is convenient, from the westerly part of Worcester, to the Merchandize Depot of the said Boston and Worcester Company, and of uniting the same, with the Road of said Company, at or near the said Depot, and fully had resolved so to do, and to commence the immediate construction thereof, and although the petitioners were fully convinced of their right so to locate their Road, under the provisions of their charter; yet they unexpectedly learn that a doubt upon the subject, has been recently suggested. Upon a question of so much importance to them, and to the public in its consequences, they are desirous of preventing any possible question in the premises. They therefore request the Commissioners, after notice, and hearing in the case, to authorize them, thus to locate their Rail Road, and to unite the same with the road of the Boston and Worcester Rail Road Corporation, as above specified.

Upon the petition aforesaid, the County Commissioners directed public

notice to all persons and corporations interested therein, that the said Commissioners would meet at the Court House, in said Worcester, on Tuesday, the sixteenth day of May, instant; at two of the clock, in the afternoon.

The County Commissioners having met at the time and place appointed, and having viewed the said route, and no person appearing to oppose the granting the prayer of the petition, it was considered and adjudged that the public interest required that the prayer of the petition should be granted, and the said Western Rail Road Corporation is hereby authorized to unite their said Rail Road with the Rail Road of the Boston and Worcester Rail Road Company, in the manner set forth in the said petition.

Ebenezer D. Ammidown, Esq. one of the County Commissioners, being absent, his place was supplied by Benjamin Davenport, Esq. one of the Special Commissioners, who was present, and acted in the view and adjudication aforesaid.

A copy of Record. Attest,

JOS. G. KENDALL, Clerk.

Note. In explanation of the Report, so far as it alludes to the foregoing proceedings, it is only necessary to state, that if the original act of incorporation of the Western Rail Road had been carried out, the termination of the Road would have been at or near the present passenger depot of the Worcester and Norwich Roads and where the common depot of the other roads, except that of the Western, is to be. The termination therefore of the Worcester, Norwich and Western Roads would in that case have been substantially at the same point.

The limited accommodations on that line for their Merchandize Depot, as is understood, led to the change prayed for in their application to the County Commissioners. The terminus of their road is now about 150 rods easterly from the passenger Depot of the Worcester Road. And in consequence of the County Commissioners authorizing this to be done, the Western Road were enabled to locate their passenger depot where it now is, instead of upon the line contemplated in their act of incorporation.

To the President and Directors of the Western Rail Road.

The memorial of the undersigned, citizens of the town of Worcester, expressing their own sentiments, and representing, as they believe, those of a great majority of the people of the town and county of Worcester, respectfully sets forth,

That they have learnt, with unspeakable disappointment and regret, the *refusal* of the Directors of the Western Rail Road to co-operate with the Directors of the Boston and Worcester, and other Rail Road Corporations, in the establishment of a common Passenger Depot, near the business centre of this town. In the judgment of the undersigned, the public convenience and interest eminently require such an arrangement. The

Shire of the largest county of the commonwealth, extending across its entire breadth, geographically bounded by three states:—the centre of a population of more than *one hundred thousand* inhabitants, nearly as large as that of some of the old States of the Union:—The concentrated point of communication, by numerous highways, with almost every part of the country:—A place of large capital, great enterprize, and of important moral and political influences and associations, would seem to be entitled, at least, to ordinary regard. While Depots are established, and even Branch Rail Roads are constructed, on claims of small comparative moment, *on other routes*, we find ourselves, with all our multiplied and varied concerns, subjected to constant and most annoying inconveniences. The whole travel *to* and *from* this town, by the Western Rail Road, under present arrangements, has to submit to *delay* and *expense* in passing *to* and *from* the cars. The train stopping on its way *east*, at the lower station, gives almost necessary occasion, especially to females, for the use of carriages to get up to town, either to be at their own homes, or for the purpose of meeting conveyances for other places;—And in going *west*, there is the same objection, with the added chances of uncertain and vexatious detention at the station house, to await the arrival of the train.

The extent of these inconveniences to those who have occasions of business in this town alone, to say nothing of the great numbers who come from the *North* to take the cars *Westward*, or from the *West* to go *North*, it is feared, has been *overlooked;* for we will not believe, if understood, it could have been so long and so utterly disregarded. Let it be recollected, that the courts, in this only shire of the county, are, at least, for three fourths of the year, in session, and *hundreds* of Jurors, and *thousands* of Witnesses, each year, are imperatively called *here*, in the course of the administration of justice;—that *here* are *all* the public offices, and the keeping of *all* the public Records,—the Registry of Deeds, to which almost every freeholder in the county has more or less occasion to resort,—the Probate Office, always open, with its courts of monthly appointment, where the widow and the orphan are often summoned to take note of proceedings, which concern their personal rights and dearest interests,—that *here* also, are *four Banks*, with more than an half million of capital; *three established Insurance Offices*, with numerous agencies of foreign similar corporations,—and that to all these institutions and places of business, of hourly recourse by multitudes of our fellow citizens, the distance, from half a mile to a mile, is interposed, by that will of the Directors, which dooms all, who come from the South parts of the county, to leave the cars at the Washington Square Depot. There is no relief from this grievance, now felt to be intolerable, but in a nearer communication, by the Rail Road, with the centre of the town. The Court House and the public offices *cannot* be removed. They are permanent structures of immense cost and recent construction, and in reference to the North and West parts of the county, and the convenience of the citizens generally, are in their proper location. If the interest of the Western Rail Road will not permit the arrangement of a transfer of its Passenger Depot, for

the accommodation of so large concerns, and so great a population, it may be hoped, it would not be too severely taxed by restoring the former partial alleviation of sending a car, from each train, to the junction with the trains of the other Rail Roads, at the upper station. We might appeal, in aid of our wishes, to a remembrance of the exertions of the people of this county, in the establishment of the Road. It will be found, on recurrence to the Records of the Legislature, that our Senators and Representatives were among the earliest, the most steadfast, and most efficient advocates of the enterprize, and that, in no small measure, was it owing to the indefatigable efforts of some of the most able and distinguished of our citizens, in and out of the halls of legislation, that the credit of the government was lent to the work, without which, *to this day*, it had not been accomplished.

Believing, as we verily do, that the permanent and substantial interest of the Road, as well as accommodation of the public, will be greatly advanced by *uniting* the passenger stations of the several Rail Roads, which connect in this town, at one common centre, we earnestly ask a *reconsideration* of any determination relative thereto, or such arrangement, instead thereof, by your Board, as shall remove the inconveniences of which this large portion of the community now so justly complain. We make no appeal to popular opinion in this matter, although, we believe, that loud expressions of discontent cannot long be suppressed. Nor yet, have we sought any interposition from the Legislature, if any might be had, in our favor. As citizens of the commonwealth—proprietors, in part, of the stock of the road, in common with those in other districts of the state, and interested in whatever affects the general welfare, we feel that we may *confidingly* address ourselves to those, to whose foresight, prudence and judgment are intrusted the direction of this great public concern, submitting to their consideration, in plain terms, but with the most entire respect, the views which we entertain upon the subject.

Worcester, March 10, 1847.

Worcester, March 30, 1847.

A. Gilmore, Esq., President, &c.

Dear Sir,—Yours of the 18th instant, having been communicated to the citizens of this town, interested in the subject matter of the memorial, the receipt of which was acknowledged by you, they were led to hope that the proposed interview, with the Directors of the Western Rail Road, might have been had at an early date.

In order to prevent any delay on their part, the citizens held a public meeting, at which a committee was chosen, to meet the Directors of the Western Rail Road, and present the views and wishes of this community, upon the subject of the location of the Passenger Depot of that Road, in this Town.

Messrs. Levi Lincoln, Emory Washburn, Charles Allen, Pliny Merrick, John Davis, Isaac Davis, George T. Rice, Stephen Salisbury, George Bowen and John W. Lincoln, were the Committee chosen.

I am now desired in behalf of the Committee, to inform you of the action that has been had here upon the subject, and to say that the Committee will be happy to wait upon the Directors of the Western Rail Road, in order to present the views of this community upon the proposed location of their Depot here, and to express their desire that the Directors would select as early a period for the interview as their convenience will permit.

Very Respectfully

Your Obt. Servant,

LEVI LINCOLN, *Chairman.*

Boston, April 26, 1847.

Hon. Levi Lincoln, Chairman.

Dear Sir:—Your favor of 30th ulto. came duly to hand, notifying me that a Committee of the citizens of Worcester had been appointed "to meet the Directors of the Western Rail Road, upon the subject of the location of the Passenger Depot."

I would now respectfully notify you that a meeting of the Directors has been called for Friday next, at 10 1-2 o'clock, A. M., at the Treasurer's Office, State Street, where they will be happy to meet you and the other members of the Committee.

Very Respectfully—Your Obt. Servant,

ADDISON GILMORE, President W. R. R.

Number of population in the towns in the County of Worcester, whose access to Worcester, as the shire town of the County, would be accommodated by means of the Western Rail Road, according to the census of 1840.

Brookfield,	2472,
Charlton,	2117,
Leicester, say	853,
New Braintree,	752,
N. Brookfield,	1485,
Oakham, say	519,
Southbridge,	2031,
Sturbridge,	2005,
Spencer,	1604,
Warren,	1290,
Hardwick, say	894,
	16,022.

Boston, April 13, 1847.

JOHN W. LINCOLN, ESQ.

Dear Sir:—Your favor of yesterday is at hand, to which I reply—

First. That the number of passengers transported, during the year 1846, between Albany and the several way stations, to Worcester, were—

1st Class,	11,530,	amounting to	$17,445,83.
2d Class,	7,764,	"	8,034,88.
	19,294		$25,480,71.

Second. The number of passengers transported, in the same time, from Worcester to Albany, and all stations upon the Western Road, were—

1st Class,	13,780,	amount received,	$20,263,54.
2d Class,	7,080,	" "	6,647,93.
	20,860,		$26,911,47.

I shall call a meeting of the Directors at an early date, for the purpose of considering the memorial of several of the Worcester gentlemen, upon the subject of the location of a Passenger Depot. I shall notify Hon. Levi Lincoln of the time and place, when the Directors will be happy to meet you and the rest of your Committee.

Very Respectfully—Your Obt. Servant,

ADDISON GILMORE, President W. R. R.

Western Railroad Office, Directors' Meeting, May 14, 1847.

TO THE DIRECTORS.

Gentlemen:—The memorial of Hon. Levi Lincoln, and others, was presented to the Directors on the 30th ult., and referred to a Committee, with instructions to consider and report thereon, and they would now respectfully present the following Report.

That the Committee entered upon their duty with the hope and expectation that they would arrive at conclusions such as would enable them to report favorably to the granting of the request of the petitioners. They were aware that advantages would result from the change, inasmuch as it would better accommodate the citizens of Worcester, and those who have occasion to go to and from that place, and they were desirous of recommending such measures as would, if adopted, meet the wishes of so large a portion of the community, provided it could be done consistently with a just regard for the public good and their duty to the stockholders; but, on investigation, the Committee find objections to granting the request, which, to their minds, entirely outweigh any advantages in its favor—some of the most prominent of which are the following:

1st. The cost of carrying out the change would not fall much short of $100,000.

2d. It would lengthen the whole line of Road about three-eighths of a mile.

3d. It would shorten the Western Road about one-eighth of a mile, and lengthen the Boston and Worcester about four-eighths of a mile, which would be unfavorable to the Western Road, as the division of joint fare is always based upon the comparative length of the two roads.

4th. It would substitute a curve line of about 600 feet radius, for a portion of the way, instead of the present one, which is nearly straight; this objection, in the minds of the Committee, is one of great importance, perhaps paramount to any other. It is believed by your Committee that, if an improvement could be made in any other portion of the line, similar to that which the present line of the Western Railroad possesses over the one which would be substituted if the change of Depots should be made, that it would be done at a charge of from $50,000 to $100,000. They are confirmed in the opinion, from the fact that the Worcester Road, one of the oldest and most experienced, now have in contemplation straightening their road for a short distance, near the arsenal, to avoid a curve of 1140 feet radius, at an expense of about $25,000.

5th. The distance between the Western Road junction and the Worcester Railroad Depot, must, on account of the number of switches and the severe curve, always be more slow, and, even then, the trains would be more liable to accident than at other portions of the line; which obstruction, coupled with the additional length of line, it is thought, would delay the trains, upon an average, nearly fifteen minutes. This would be a serious objection to the quick trains, particularly such as may be running between Boston and New York; besides, it would be a great inconvenience to that portion of the travel which are joint with the Boston and Worcester Road, and that have no occasion for stopping at Worcester, which are large, compared with those going to and from Worcester, from the west.

In conclusion, the Committee deem it proper to notice one of the prominent reasons which has been urged in favor of making the change, viz: "That by establishing the Boston and Worcester, the Western, the Providence and Worcester, and the Norwich and Worcester Depots, in one building, common to all, it would better accommodate those who are desirous of changing from one line of road to the other." This would be a very natural conclusion, but whether it would prove so or not, is a question which may very fairly be doubted. There can be no doubt that, by locating the Depots near each other, it would be a convenience, but it is doubted by some, whether any advantages could be derived by having so many Corporations meet in one Depot, with the confusion and errors which would naturally occur under such an arrangement, over the advantages of a separate Depot on the present site of the Western Rail Road Depot.

However gratifying it might be for the Committee to recommend that

the request of the memorialists should be granted, they feel it to be their duty to report against its adoption.

Respectfully submitted.

(Signed.) ADDISON GILMORE, JONATHAN CHAPMAN, JAMES RUSSELL, STEPHEN FAIRBANKS, } Committee.

Directors' Meeting, May 14, 1847.

The Report was read and unanimously adopted, and a copy thereof ordered to be transmitted to the Petitioners.

ELLIS GRAY LORING, Clerk.

END OF
TITLE